

A high-angle photograph of a commercial kitchen. In the background, a person is working at a stainless steel prep table. The kitchen features large stainless steel ranges with multiple burners, ovens, and storage cabinets. Several stainless steel prep tables are arranged in the foreground and middle ground, some with red and green plastic bins underneath. The floor is covered with red and brown grates.

# **FOOD INCUBATOR FEASIBILITY STUDY**

**Presented by  
Your Management  
Team, Inc.**



**FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FOOD INCUBATOR TO BE  
LOCATED IN THE SOUTH SIDE OF COLUMBUS**







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**Eating is not  
merely a material  
pleasure. Eating well  
gives a spectacular joy  
to life and contributes  
immensely to goodwill  
and happy companionship.  
It is of great importance  
to the morale.**

**- Elsa Schiaparelli**



## FEASIBILITY STUDY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Your Management Team, Inc. (YMT) has been hired by Parsons Avenue Merchants Association (PAMA) to evaluate the viability of developing and launching a food incubator program to be located within the South Side of Columbus, Ohio, preferably in the Southern Gateway area. In order to effectively provide answers as to the viability of locating a food incubator within the Southern Gateway area of South Columbus, YMT first had to understand the needs and wants of all stakeholders within the area including the City of Columbus, South Side residents, South Side community leaders and Central Ohio food entrepreneurs.

In order to gain insights for this report, YMT interviewed residents and entrepreneurs one-on-one, hosted focus groups within the community, reviewed numerous reports including the Southern Gateway Community Report<sup>1</sup>, Visions for a Healthier Community<sup>2</sup>, U.S. Kitchen Incubators: An Industry Snapshot<sup>3</sup>, and Social Capital and Equitable Neighborhood Revitalization on Columbus' Southside<sup>4</sup>. YMT also reviewed existing organizations already providing services within Central Ohio along with researching existing food incubators across the country.

A full recommendation will be found later in this report, however during the research phase of this study it became apparent that in order to be successful, a South Columbus food incubator must meet the needs of both the surrounding South Columbus neighborhoods and the local food entrepreneurs who will be taking advantage of their programs and services. The goal of selecting the South Side of Columbus as the location for the food incubator was due to the desire by the City of Columbus and PAMA to revitalize the two-mile stretch of Parsons Avenue from East Livingston Avenue to State Route 104, and provide workforce development and entrepreneurial training to neighborhood residents and small business owners within the region. In 2011, Mayor Michael B. Coleman committed to revitalizing the Southern Gateway. Since that time, numerous initiatives have been undertaken including opening of the new Columbus Neighborhood Health Center and renovation of the Reeb Elementary School. PAMA's Executive Director, Bob Leighty, is the brains behind the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus, and developed the idea to continue addressing the needs of the community with a goal of providing education, jobs and access to healthy food. Leighty hopes to combine his desire to continue developing Parsons Avenue with his experience working with food entrepreneurs.

Unlike other food incubators, an incubator developed on the South Side of Columbus must serve two completely different target audiences in order to succeed – residents and entrepreneurs. This requirement provides a unique challenge as well as a unique opportunity that the majority of food incubators across the country do not have to meet, and that is how to structure programs and services that will provide benefit to the residents of the South Side and serve the needs of food entrepreneurs, all while generating enough income to support the food incubator.

This report will focus on answering the following three questions, as well as make recommendations on specific programs/services, along with next steps going forward.

1. *Could a food incubator located within the Southern Gateway thrive and benefit the neighborhood and its food entrepreneurs? If yes, what programs and services should the incubator offer?*
2. *Could the food incubator meet the goals of the Southern Gateway Community Report making it a destination bringing outsiders to the South Side?*
3. *How the new South Columbus food incubator will develop programs / services that will enhance rather than compete with existing food incubator programs located within Central Ohio?*





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## WHAT IS A FOOD INCUBATOR?

A food incubator, also known as a kitchen incubator, is defined as a business dedicated to providing support, services, shared resources and funding for early-stage catering, truck, retail, and wholesale food businesses. Per the National Business Incubator Association (NBIA), although the first incubator opened in New York in 1959, the incubator concept did not really take off until the economic downturn in mid-1980. Since the 1980's the incubator concept has grown across the country with more than 1,250 programs serving an estimated 7,000 entrepreneurial businesses with 11% of the 1,250 (or 135) incubators focusing specifically on assisting food entrepreneurs. National Business Incubator Association (NBIA) research shows that:

- 93% of incubators are non-profit organizations focused on economic development.
- 50% of incubators have been identified as mixed-use facilities.
- 39% of incubators are technology focused.
- 11% of incubators focus on food entrepreneurs.
- 32% of incubators are sponsored by academic institutions.
- 30% of business incubator programs are partially funded through city economic development divisions or academic institutions.
- 16% of incubator programs are sponsored by government entities.

Examples of food incubators include:

- HBK Incubates is located in New York City, NY. Program provides 2,300 square feet of shared kitchen space for entrepreneurs who have outgrown their home kitchen. Besides shared kitchen space, HBK provides monthly business and culinary workshops, one-on-one monthly finance advising, marketing opportunities and community connections. [www.hotbreadkitchen.org/hbk-incubator](http://www.hotbreadkitchen.org/hbk-incubator).
- Kitchener is located in Oakland, CA. A commercial kitchen focused on startup microbusinesses who support local, organic and/or sustainable ingredients and are conscientious about supporting the local food economy. In addition to the commercial kitchen, several times a year Kitchener will showcase their food entrepreneurs through pop-up markets and open houses. [www.kitcheneroakland.com](http://www.kitcheneroakland.com).
- Detroit Kitchen Connect is located in Detroit, MI. Detroit Kitchen Connect was developed to minimize the kitchen rental cost for early stage entrepreneurs proving shared kitchen space. [www.detroitkitchenconnect.com](http://www.detroitkitchenconnect.com).
- Union Kitchen is located in Washington, DC. Union Kitchen is a membership food incubator providing a shared kitchen, catering opportunities, distribution services, marketing, and connections. [www.unionkitchendc.com](http://www.unionkitchendc.com).
- The Cookery is located in Durham, NC. A membership organization providing a commercial kitchen, food storage, food truck terminals as well as support, marketing consultation and business seminars. [www.durhamcookery.com](http://www.durhamcookery.com).

There are also two food incubators located within Central Ohio.



- Food Fort is a food incubator located within the Economic Community Development Institute (ECDI), a non-profit micro-lender located at 1655 Old Leonard Avenue, Columbus, OH 43229. Food Fort provides entrepreneurs three full-service kitchens, walk-in coolers and freezers, dry storage and prep areas, along with training, marketing, sales assistance and 24/7 access. [www.foodfort.com](http://www.foodfort.com).
- The Commissary is a food incubator located at 1400 Dublin Road, Columbus, OH 43215 and offers three kitchens with various services for rent, four private kitchens for lease, food truck parking and storage, storage space, training, and meeting space. [www.thecommissarycolumbus.com](http://www.thecommissarycolumbus.com).

The growth of the incubator concept, desire to own a business, and easy entry into the food industry validates the need and effectiveness of food incubators. Per Econsult Solutions<sup>5</sup>, *“expanding interest in kitchen incubators is not surprising considering recent trends in the culinary industry. Across the nation, local, fresh, organic and artisanal products are gaining market share.”* As the above examples show, existing food incubators focus on the specific needs of food entrepreneurs including shared resources and shared purchasing power along with business training and services without having to embrace the neighborhood in which they are located. With food businesses growing at a rate of 10-13% per year<sup>6</sup>, developing a food incubator to be located within the South Side of Columbus could provide an opportunity for food entrepreneurs to collaborate and support each other, it could also provide an opportunity for residents located within the South Side access to education, entrepreneurship, jobs and healthy food.

Developing and monetizing a food incubator that balances the needs of food entrepreneurs with the needs of the South Columbus neighborhoods in which it is located opens the door for a creative incubator concept unlike anything that currently exists in the country. In order to develop a creative and unique incubator concept, stakeholders were asked a series of questions as to what they envisioned the South Columbus food incubator would provide.

## RESPONSES TO SURVEY

### 1. What does the term *food incubator* mean to you?

- An organization that helps to bring food concepts to market, to assist with ideas, funding, structure and growth.
- Providing a place for individuals to develop food culture, ideas and businesses; a one-stop shop for food sustainability.
- A food based organization where entities interested in launching a food business can get support.
- Meeting place for diverse communities where businesses are taken from development to creation to market.
- A place where you get started knowing you won't be there long term.
- A place where folks can ready themselves to be a sustainable business.
- A place for experimentation, a place that helps early stage businesses hatch, walk and fly away.
- I don't know the answer but it has to provide synergy between the entrepreneur's needs and the community's needs.

2. **What type of products and/or services do you envision being offered within the incubator?**

- Accessibility to healthy foods.
- Programs to overcome the current health crisis.
- Full suite of services – space, education and funding; coordinated system that provides programs and services, to partner with, instead of overlapping existing programs in Weiland Park, Linden and Franklinton.
- Food creation, scientific food play.
- Anything at this point.
- Coffee shop and meeting space with food.
- Organic and fresh vegetables.
- Shared services for baking, refrigeration, food product storage, and joint purchasing.

3. **What types of products and/or services do you feel would benefit the neighborhood, residents and food entrepreneurs within the Southern Gateway?**

- Affordable housing for young professionals.
- Community gardens.
- Fresh ingredients
- Any mindful food business would be a benefit.
- The opportunity for the community to get involved. People feel comfortable with food, but the incubator must be respectful of the culture and provide food with a healthy twist.
- Financing programs, training, business plan development.
- Food processing is important. Farmers need a way to get their products to market, an aggregation point.
- Healthy food should be a primary focus.
- Products that bring foreign tastes back to the neighborhood.

4. **Would you like to see a *South Market* as part of the incubator located within the Southern Gateway?**

Yes – 80%

- Yes, would like to see a large outdoor market but not a replica of the North Market.
- Yes, because the south side currently doesn't have anything like it.
- Yes, a market is about creating an experience but price point will be important.



- Yes, with healthy food.
- Yes, doesn't have to be as extravagant as the North Market. Would like to see the market accept food stamps to make purchasing healthy food more affordable.
- Yes, there is a need for a farmers market, but the right mix will be important.
- Yes, would like to see it provide neighborhood pride, highlighting the rich sense of family and culture, featuring the legacy of the neighborhood.
- Yes, more of a traditional market would be great.

No – 10%

- No, the North Market exists for historical reasons. That model doesn't create a business focus that is replicable.
- Maybe - 10%
- Sounds amazing if it would get the types of traffic needed to sustain itself.

5. **Do you feel there is a need for a *Greenhouse* as part of the incubator located within the Southern Gateway?**

Yes – 60%

- Yes, a greenhouse would be optimum to extending the growing season.
- Yes, but only for demonstration and instruction purposes.
- Yes, but would need to have a point of difference –aquaponics.
- Yes, could help with providing healthy food.
- Yes, a greenhouse would be awesome.
- Yes, it would be invaluable for training and producing fresh produce; a biosphere/hydroponic greenhouse could be a draw.

No – 10%

- No idea, but it will be difficult and expensive to develop and maintain.
- Maybe -30%
- Not sure how it fits with the incubator but could be cool.
  - Not a need but could have a role, depends upon the reason for having a greenhouse.

6. **Do you like the idea of including a *Local Themed Restaurant* as part of the incubator located within the Southern Gateway?**

Yes – 80%

- Yes, it would help the local economy by providing jobs.
- Yes, I am all for anything that will attract people to the area.
- Yes, adding a restaurant could create a destination place that generates traffic to the area.
- Sure, affordable, local food would be great. Focus would be to generate business, employment and jobs.
- Yes, as long as the restaurant could be an anchor.
- Yes, would like to see it local not a chain. There is a need for a number of restaurants in the area.
- Yes, needs to focus on locally grown food and serving the local community. Needs to provide job training as well as food.
- Yes, would like it to incorporate the neighborhoods cultural roots.

No – 10%

- Do not think it is needed. Takes the focus off what you are doing.

Maybe - 10%

- As we change the community and grow a restaurant could be a good fit but it would require a lot of marketing to overcome people's perception of the South Side.

7. **Do you like the idea of including a *Local Themed Store* as part of the incubator located within the Southern Gateway?**

Yes – 50%

- Great idea, price-point will be important.
- Yes, would attract people to the area.
- Yes, but it would have to be supported by the neighborhood.
- Yes, would bring uniqueness of products; could provide the incubator a claim to fame making it a destination.

No – 10%

- No, if we are going to serve the environment it doesn't fit unless it is historical. Need to embrace the culture of the neighborhood.

Maybe - 40%

- Could have some merit but would have to build the trust first, would have to develop a relationship with the community before it would be supported.
- Concerned it will have a hard time making money, if there is a store price point will be important.
- Could take the focus off the incubator, everything needs to complement each other, not compete.



- Sounds good, but it may sound better than it actually is.

8. **Do you feel a *Research Kitchen* would be a benefit within the incubator assisting food entrepreneurs develop and scale their recipes?**

Yes – 90%

- As an incubator it will be essential.
- Yes, it is important and will provide an opportunity for food entrepreneurs to do business with larger concerns.
- Columbus is known as a test market but that is more fast food, we need to develop a test market focus for food entrepreneurship.
- Yes, keeping in mind other programs such as Franklin County Local Food Council and make sure the incubator does not compete.
- Yes, the more services you have the more people will utilize the incubator.
- Definitely, will assist existing and growing entrepreneurs.
- Yes, could be a multi-purpose kitchen where chefs collaborate; could be used for educational purposes.
- Yes, a kitchen provides basic infrastructure – you can reduce the cost of getting into business. Shared space decreases costs and increases benefits for entrepreneurs.
- Yes, it's a natural and important part of the business network. Makes the incubator a complete and whole entity.

No – 0%

Maybe - 10%

- Not sure, OSU has a research kitchen and it sits empty a lot of the time. Could be worthwhile if a plan was in place to market and utilize the kitchen.
- Will require a lot of groundwork to get people to use the services. There are different groups who do not interact well with each other.

9. **Would an *Edible Forest* add value to the incubator and the neighborhood?**

Yes – 40%

- Would be unique and something that people would want to check out. The more you add to the incubator the better.
- Yes, pretty cool and there is a need for that. Also, from a beautification view it has appeal.
- Yes, it's fun and would be a point of difference.
- Yes, would be extremely positive. Could build excitement within the community.

No – 30%

- No, do not believe it will add anything.
- No, would be another thing to operate and might diffuse capital.
- Not sure it can be monetized, it will require capital that might not be available.
- Not a critical element, could be hard to manage and might become property intensive.

Maybe - 30%

- Doesn't see how it would fit, but does like the idea of an orchard.
- Sounds like a gimmick, but might be useful as an educational tool. Maybe a partnership with OSU?

10. **Do you feel there is a need for *workshops and training programs* focused on entrepreneurs and job training as part of the incubator located within the Southern Gateway?**

Yes – 70%

- Yes, can never have enough training.
- Yes, but do not have to do all the training yourself, could partner with other organizations.
- Yes, gaining skills and knowledge, not sure if anyone is doing this well.
- Yes, but could partner with other organizations to provide training.
- Yes, there is a huge gap with very little training going on right now.
- Yes, training is an indispensable part of launching a business.

No – 10%

- No, there are training programs that already exist.

Maybe –20%

- If it is monetized it could be helpful, but who is going to pay for it?
- Maybe, but might make more sense to partner with organizations that are already providing training.

11. **Would you like to see a *Hall of Fame* capture and display the stories of successful food entrepreneurs from Ohio, and especially the Southern Gateway?**

Yes – 50%

- Would be wonderful to showcase successful entrepreneurs.
- Could provide historical pride and an attraction.



- Yes, there are a lot of great stories in Central Ohio.
- Yes, Reeb is currently doing something like this and it could be a continuum of the center.
- Sure, could offer naming rights. Would like to see it focused on the South Side.

No – 40%

- No, doesn't think it would add much, doesn't think the community would care.
- No, not sure of the benefit.
- Not sure it will inspire people if that is the intention.

Maybe - 10%

- Doesn't see how it would fit unless it helps with fundraising. Would rather see the focus on the incubator. Could offer naming rights.

**12. Would you like to see the food incubator utilize one of the existing (and closed) *Manufacturing facilities* located within the Southern Gateway offering food entrepreneurs an opportunity to manufacture their products in the facility?**

Yes – 70%

- Yes, it would be a great benefit to repurpose a building, it would say something about the revitalization of the community.
- Yes, fabulous idea. It would be part of the revitalization and urban planning of the area. Also would provide jobs.
- Yes, a smart way to get buy-in. Needs to be a flexible space to meet a variety of needs.
- Yes, the incubator making use of building not in use would be great.
- Yes, it seems like a growth opportunity providing jobs.
- Yes, but not sure how many existing plants will be fit for food production, but would like to see them used if possible.
- Yes, reuse is very well received.

No –0%

Maybe – 30%

- At some point, but need to get people to the incubator first.
- Might be interesting to the food businesses within the incubator.
- Yes, it sounds like a good idea since there is so much available space, but it could cost a lot to renovate.

**13. Would you like to see a *Logistics company* utilizing one of the existing (and closed) *Manufacturing facilities* for the packaging and distribution of food entrepreneur's products?**

Yes – 60%

- Yes, it just makes sense.
- Sure, could provide great job opportunities.
- Yes, again, could provide a needed service and provide jobs for the community.
- Yes, would be a boon for jobs, the community is under educated but they could be trained and employ people who are hard to employ.
- Yes, it would be a good use of an existing facility.
- Yes, would be indispensable for the growth of entrepreneurs and would provide jobs for the community.

No – 0%

Maybe – 40%

- A possibility, something more centrally located could be a good idea.
- Yes, but down the line.
- Would be a later phase, doesn't seem necessary at first.
- Maybe, but would prefer you partner with food distributors, need to see the value-add and the ROI.

**14. Of the items above you said yes to, would you like to see them all located in one facility or could they be scattered around Parsons Avenue?**

- The market and store should be located together as well as the manufacturing and distribution, but they do not have to all be located in one place.
- There are groups of activities that belong together, but they do not have to all be located together. Need to allow a natural growth.
- Could be located around Parsons but would need to be branded together for cohesiveness.
- Everything needed to grow and prosper should be in one place.
- Could scatter the various programs, but the more we can keep things in one place the better.
- Can be scattered, but would need one showroom place which is your market.
- Can be scattered, it would be best to create green spaces than to fill all the businesses first, which would provide a balance to meet everyone's needs.
- The programs and services could be spread around Parsons.
- Could be scattered, but would prefer to see a campus environment, sort of a third places concept.



**15. What needs within the community could the food incubator address?**

- Accessibility to affordable and healthy food.
- Jobs.
- Programming and job opportunities.
- Entrepreneurial classes.
- Support and somewhere for entrepreneurs to turn.
- Serve the immigrant population; bring products to the forefront and assist businesses to define themselves better.
- Education on health and wellness.
- Create jobs through business ownership.
- Jobs and income. Both are needed. If teach residents to become entrepreneurs they have increased opportunity for income outside of low paying food jobs.
- People on the street. The area feels sparse because people aren't outside. The incubator could be a destination.

**16. What can the food incubator do to assist existing programs located within the Gateway?**

- Work with Reeb Center to bring awareness of healthy foods, education and resources teaching how to prepare healthy food. Nutrition knowledge is important.
- Needs to provide a level of scaling for food entrepreneurs that isn't currently happening.
- Develop beneficial programming; provide meeting space.
- Meet and have conversations with them so you partner rather than compete.
- Support, existence of successful businesses draws more people to the neighborhood.

**17. What types of retail businesses would you like to see located within the Southern Gateway?**

- Produce, convenience store, co-op market. Like the idea of the neighborhood getting involved.
- Target, hardware store, a town center type model similar to Lennox.
- Coffee shop, retail that will bring activity. Need a mix of businesses.
- Businesses that are somehow related to help build a culture and environment.
- A grocery outlet and bookstores.
- Specialty stores such as ingredients for the food entrepreneurs and kitchen equipment.

- Coffee shop, family entertainment where families can socialize more.
- Clothing stores, shoes stores, need more of these types of businesses.
- First need to do an inventory of what's available before this question can be answered effectively.

**18. How can a food incubator assist with achieving the goals outlined in the Southern Gateway Community report making the Southern Gateway a destination?**

- Creating a novelty that would drive people to the area.
- Could be part of the solution.
- As an anchor it could help attract businesses that could make Parsons a destination.
- Make it a tourist concept having community events, festivals; make it a gathering place.
- Depends on the focus – are you a public market? Or, do you want to be a destination for others to visit?
- Whenever there is vision there is opportunity, it is about how to pull together the incubator to accomplish this.
- A south market could be a destination, but do not see the incubator itself as a draw.
- Depends, what is its mission and focus? Are you a food developer, food manufacturer, etc?
- If you build it right it will be a draw for entrepreneurs and for people outside the neighborhood. The incubator by itself isn't a draw, it's the specialty pieces that will make the difference.





*Chef Jose  
David Martinez*  
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## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SERVICES AND PROGRAMS:

Taking into consideration answers to the above questions, the needs of food entrepreneurs, the needs of the neighborhood, and the requirement to monetize the organization, it is our recommendation that a South Columbus Fresh Food Campus be created. The South Columbus Fresh Food Campus will need to become a destination by creating a campus type of environment that will draw customers and entrepreneurs from the neighborhood and surrounding areas, providing access to new and existing food products along with education on healthy food, entrepreneurship and manufacturing. At its core, the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus has to serve the immediate needs of the Southern Gateway neighborhoods and at the same time stay ahead of the foodie trends in order to drive customers and entrepreneurs to Parsons Avenue. Recommended programs could include:

1. **Third Places.** To succeed, the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus will need more customers than just South Side residents, the campus will need individuals and families from outside the area willing to travel to Parsons Avenue to dine and shop. Creating a third places concept has the potential to increase the repeat customer base, provide a social or community environment, and has the opportunity of generating economic growth. Third Places, a term coined by urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg in his book *Celebrating The Third Place*, defines third places as social-hubs outside of work or home where people feel comfortable to congregate.

In order to develop a third places environment our recommendation would be to create a campus type setting with all the pieces and parts of the incubator located in one overall area on multiple acreages on Parsons Avenue and just off of Parsons Avenue. The key to developing a third places environment that becomes a destination is uniqueness and relevancy. Therefore, we recommend offering programs such as pop-up restaurants, growing healthy food in greenhouses, aquaponics, a root cellar and edible forests, a general store selling entrepreneurs products and fresh food grown at the incubator and neighborhood gardens and small batch manufacturing.

**Education About Fresh food.** Numerous reports exist on the need to address the challenges of the Southern Gateway neighborhoods lack of healthy food and education. In order to succeed, the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus must develop programs that meet this important neighborhood challenge. The recent report, *Visions for a Healthier Community*, by Local Matters recommended teaching residents the importance of growing their own healthy food, hosting community workshops and providing options for healthy vegetables. The South Columbus Fresh Food Campus could meet these recommendations by hosting workshops at the center teaching residents, schools, individuals, and budding entrepreneur's environmentally friendly ways to grow their own food and how to turn their food products into a viable business.

**General Retail Store.** Our recommendation is to combine the concept of a Parsons Avenue retail store selling entrepreneurial value-added food products and affordable bulk foods to complement the nearby Mae's Produce and the nearby South Side Roots Cafe and Market. The Parsons General Store could also provide an opportunity for food entrepreneurs working within the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus an opportunity to sell their food products in the store. The Wall Street Journal article, *Reviving the General Store*, states there is a resurgence with the general store that "*combine community spirit with a personal take on merchandising*." Price point will be important for local residents in order to be able to purchase products, therefore we recommend accepting food stamps at the store for approved products.



**Destination.** In order to become a destination, the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus will have to provide programs and services that will drive people within and outside the neighborhood to visit, hang-out, and shop at their campus. Unique programs such as a root cellar, aquaponics, and an edible forest add a uniqueness and educational component for school systems as a field trip, families to learn about the unique programs, food entrepreneurs needing service, and just as a cool destination.

**South Columbus Visitor Center.** A new, highly visible South Columbus Visitor Center could be created on Parsons Avenue to promote the entire Southern Gateway redevelopment area, in particular providing information about the educational programming at the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus, the Edible Forest, campus greenhouses and other plant growing educational facilities. This combination of campus features could encourage local residents to take the opportunity to become entrepreneurs by growing their own fresh produce for themselves and selling extra produce at Mae's Produce or the Roots Market as an additional revenue stream for their families.

2. **Education and Training.** An important aspect of an incubator is training and education, not only for the food entrepreneur but for the neighborhood and Central Ohio residents.

**Business and entrepreneurial training.** There are a number of organizations that provide training on business basics such as how to develop a business plan, how to market your business, and financial literacy. We recommend these training programs as well, however going deeper into food training we recommend classes and education on how to get products onto retail shelves, managing food costs, scaling recipes for growth, and pricing products.

**Growing healthy food.** In addition to business classes for entrepreneurs we recommend education programs for residents and the community on growing healthy food. The South Columbus Fresh Food Campus could provide training and supplies for residents interested in growing their own produce. In addition, by focusing on making the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus a destination, the incubator could create education programs around the edible forest, aquaponics and the root cellar as an opportunity to partner with schools for field trips increasing awareness and customers.

**Taking products to market.** Finally, programs for residents who would like to grow organic vegetables in their yard for sale, area farms that would like the opportunity to sell their produce to center entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurs that would like to sell their products at the general store and in retail grocery stores, learning how to manufacture, package, price and approach stores and customers will be a huge benefit for every level of entrepreneur.

**Job training.** Opportunities for jobs could arise with the store, manufacturing pods, and the incubator itself. In addition, entrepreneurship training may also provide area residents jobs through the development of their own small business.

3. **Testing and Feedback.** By providing an opportunity for entrepreneurs to gain feedback before investing a considerable amount of time and money into a business endeavor is a great opportunity for entrepreneurs to validate and improve their recipes before launching their business, or provides an opportunity for food product entrepreneurs to improve their products.

**Pop-Up Restaurants.** Could provide an opportunity for food entrepreneurs to test market their recipes and restaurant concepts. Pop-up restaurants are quickly becoming an alternative to traditional dining. With a strong *foodies* community within Central Ohio, the pop-up restaurant could provide a steady stream of patrons interested in trying out a new concept each week/weekend providing feedback to the entrepreneurs before they formally launch their restaurants. Embracing the pop-up restaurant concept would accomplish two things, first, the food entrepreneur could validate their concepts before a major investment generating a potential client base before they launch. Second, pop-up restaurants could be a steady draw of *foodies* eager to be the first to try new concepts and provide their feedback.

**Focus Groups.** Whereas the pop-up restaurant is a great opportunity for restaurateurs to test market their restaurant concepts, focus groups provide an opportunity for food product entrepreneurs to test their food product concepts. Focus groups could provide feedback on product taste, pricing and packaging.

4. **Manufacturing & Scalability:** As an entrepreneur secures space within retail stores they usually need to manufacture larger quantities of their product. This means the entrepreneur will need to increase manufacturing quantities and may need to adjust their recipes appropriately.

**Manufacturing Pods.** The challenge many entrepreneurs find themselves in as they begin to place their product on retail shelves is that increased manufacturing of their food product still means small quantities for many manufacturing plants forcing the entrepreneur to purchase and store larger quantities of product that was needed, often times severely depleting cash flow. Developing manufacturing pods for small manufacturing runs could allow food product entrepreneurs to increase production quantities at a level that makes sense for the business owner increasing their growth rather than impeding their growth.

**Research Kitchen.** Increasing manufacturing also means the entrepreneur may need to adjust the quantity of their ingredients to still maintain their quality. Working with a food scientist in a test kitchen at the incubator is an important and needed program for business sustainability and growth.

5. **Office Space:** The final recommendation is to provide office space for food entrepreneurs and vendors creating a community of entrepreneurs and resources to grow existing businesses.

While we recommend the above programs and services, we do not feel that the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus has to own and manage all the pieces and parts. Partnering with existing organizations around Central Ohio, organizations with a proven track record in fresh food industries, would be a viable option for providing services with minimal risk and without added overhead and cost.





## POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS:

The following organizations have been identified by Bob Leighty, Executive Director of PAMA as likely partners with PAMA to provide programming and/or services to residents and businesses using the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus.

### Business Training and Education

- **Central Ohio Restaurant Association.** Located at 17 S. High Street, Suite 200, Columbus, OH 43215. CORA launched in 1956 to represent restaurants, food product businesses, and product equipment organizations promoting food safety and education. [www.centralohiorestaurants.org](http://www.centralohiorestaurants.org).
- **Columbus City Schools Adult & Community Education.** Internships and classes within the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. <http://www.ccsch.us/AboutACE.aspx>
- **Columbus College of Art & Design.** Located at 60 Cleveland Avenue, Columbus, OH. Packaging and marketing services. <http://www.ccad.edu/>
- **Folsom & Pine Farm.** A family owned farm located at 5959 Lambert Road, Orient, OH. Greenhouse classes, mentoring and training. <http://www.folsomandpine.com/>
- **Food Fort at ECDI.** Located at 1655 Old Leonard Avenue, Columbus, OH is a food incubator assisting would-be entrepreneurs through shared kitchen rentals, coolers and freezers, along with training, technical assistance, and microlending and grants. [www.ecdi.org/innovate/food-fort](http://www.ecdi.org/innovate/food-fort).
- **Franklin University.** Located at 201 S. Grant Avenue, Columbus, OH, Franklin University providing entrepreneur services. <http://guides.franklin.edu/profile.php?uid=90070>
- **Local food brokers and packaging experts.** Offices, classes, and consulting/mentoring.
- **Luna Burger.** Located at 5760 Westbourne Avenue, Columbus, OH, Food kitchen, production, packaging, and shipping facility along with training and mentoring. <http://www.lunaburger.com/locations/>
- **North Market.** Located at 59 Spruce Street, Columbus, OH 43215, the North Market is a foodie destination providing retail space for food entrepreneurs to sell their products to the community. [www.northmarket.com](http://www.northmarket.com).
- **Ohio Small Business Development Center** at Columbus State Community College. SBDC could assist with providing office space, classes and mentoring. <http://www.sbdccolumbus.com/>
- **OSU Extension.** Could assist with office space and classes. <http://franklin.osu.edu/>
- **Women's Small Business Accelerator.** An accelerator focused on training and mentoring women small business owners through free clinics, formalized mentoring programs, and an intensive six-month education program. <http://www.wsbaohio.org/>

## Healthy Food Training

- **Franklin County Local Food Council.** Is a public/private partnership developed in 2011 to expand, strengthen and maintain a resilient and local food system in Franklin County and the surrounding area. [www.fclocalfoodcouncil.org](http://www.fclocalfoodcouncil.org).
- **Franklin Park Conservatory.** Greenhouse and community gardens, located at 1770 East Broad Street. <http://www.fpconservatory.org/The-Experience/Gardening-Programs>
- **Franklinton Gardens.** Started in 2007 as a lone community garden on a small vacant lot, Franklinton Gardens has since developed into a thriving network of gardens and food production sites scattered throughout the neighborhood's urban landscape. Franklinton Gardens provides organic food production, garden-based activities, educational programs, and employment opportunities in order to empower neighbors and build a healthy community. More information can be found at [www.franklintongardens.org](http://www.franklintongardens.org).
- **Godman Guild.** Located at 303 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Columbus, OH 43201, Godman Guild has served Central Ohio since 1898. In 2005 the Weinland Park Community Garden at Godman Guild providing job training, education and community around food. [www.godmanguild.org/youth-family-services/garden](http://www.godmanguild.org/youth-family-services/garden).
- **Local Matters.** Launched in 2002 through a USDA grant, Local Matters works to achieve a stronger, more secure local food system. [www.local-matters.org](http://www.local-matters.org).
- **Mid-Ohio Foodbank.** The Mid-Ohio Foodbank will be running the South Side Roots Café and Market in the Reeb Community Center, scheduled to open in September 2015. <http://www.midohiofoodbank.org/>

## Manufacturing and General Store

- **Luna Burger.** The maker of six varieties of pure plant veggie burgers. Hand-crafted and manufactured in Columbus Ohio with whole food, locally-sourced, & non-GMO ingredients. [www.lunaburger.com](http://www.lunaburger.com).

## Greenhouse and Edible Forest

- **Folson & Pine Greenhouses.** A farm focused on growing micro-greens, lettuces, herbs and seasonal produce. Located at 5959 Lambert Road, Orient, OH 43146, Folsom & Pine's emphasis is on supporting the community, connecting the concepts of earth and quality, and promoting fresh farm-to-table products. [www.folsom-pine-llc.com](http://www.folsom-pine-llc.com).

## Shared Kitchen, Scale-Up Kitchen, Research Kitchen.

- **The Commissary.** The Commissary, developed by local entrepreneurs as a resource to food entrepreneurs, provides flexible kitchens for rent, event space, a test kitchen and brewery and educational programs. The Commissary is located at 1400 Dublin Road, Columbus, OH. [www.thecommissarycolumbus.com](http://www.thecommissarycolumbus.com).
- **Center for Innovative Food Technology (CIFT).** Located at 5555 Airport Hwy, Ste. 200, Toledo, OH with a small presence at The Dublin Entrepreneurial Center (The DEC), CIFT launched in 1995 in partnership with the Northwest Ohio Cooperative Kitchen (NOCK) providing product development, marketing direction, technical assistance including nutritional analysis and shelf-life stability testing, safety training, and shared resources. [www.ciftinnovation.org](http://www.ciftinnovation.org).



## DEFINITIONS:

**Aquaponics:** A food production system combining conventional aquaculture (raising aquatic animals such as snails, fish, crayfish or prawns in tanks) with hydroponics (cultivating plants in water).

**Edible Forest:** A low-maintenance type of forest environment incorporating fruit and nut trees, shrubs, herbs, vines and perennial vegetables.

**Focus Groups.** A group of diverse people assembled to participate in a discussion for feedback on the viability of a particular product.

**General Store:** A store, typically in a small town that sells a variety of products.

**Greenhouse:** An enclosed structure used for cultivating and protecting plants.

**Pop-Up Restaurants:** A temporary restaurant providing an opportunity for chefs and restaurateurs to try out recipes and concepts.

**Root Cellar:** An underground (or partially underground) structure used to store vegetables, fruits, nuts or other foods.

**Third Places:** Locations outside of work or home where people who do not know each other congregate.







## CONCLUSION

A food incubator located on Parsons Avenue could be a viable option to meet the desire listed in the Southern Gateway Community Report making Parsons Avenue a destination. However, in order to succeed, the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus must overcome a few serious concerns. First, the campus has to overcome safety concerns from potential customers living outside the South Side neighborhood. The high crime rate currently twice the average rate and the number of vacant and abandoned building may create safety concerns by individuals outside of the area preventing them from visiting the incubator campus. Overcoming this concern is vital in order to drive individuals willing to patron the incubator in order to generate enough interest and revenue to meet expenses.

Second, existing incubators reviewed across the country typically focus specifically on food entrepreneurs, but the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus will need to meet the needs of two distinct and separate target audiences – residents and entrepreneurs in order to succeed. Instead of offering the typical services associated with food incubators, thinking outside-the-box, bringing products and services that are unique, interesting and bring value could be the key to driving patrons from outside the neighborhood to visit the incubator. In addition to developing a unique idea, the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus will need to develop a strategic business plan and in-depth financials in order to ensure programs and services selected to be part of the incubator are monetized effectively and provide value for both target audiences.

There are also positive reasons why a food incubator located on Parsons Avenue could succeed. By creating and maintaining a unique concept, the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus has the opportunity to develop a concept that other urban areas could emulate. Locating the incubator on Parsons has the opportunity to show the rest of Central Ohio the incredible history of the area. In addition, unlike other redeveloped areas of Columbus, a food incubator located on Parsons Avenue could benefit area residents without displacing them.

## CONCEPT FEASIBILITY

Launching a food incubator in the South Side of Columbus focused on economic development of the area, scaling food entrepreneurs, and positively impacting residents and stakeholders could provide a system that brings existing customers and resources to the South Side. The growth of food incubators across the country validate the viability of the food incubator concept.

In order to develop an incubator that will meet the needs of both target audiences it is our opinion that the incubator must meet the desire of the Southern Gateway Community Report making it a *destination* that would drive people to the neighborhood from around Central Ohio. In order to turn the incubator into a destination location it is our recommendation that the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus will need to develop a campus concept. Addressing the needs of both target audiences – residents and entrepreneurs – means creating a non-traditional incubator concept. By creating unique programs and services specific for the area, the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus will not be working from best practices, but from knowledge of the needs within the area that have been documented within numerous reports along with knowledge of the needs of food entrepreneurs that have also been documented by numerous studies. Jobs, training, support, and resources have been a consistent theme. Throughout the one-on-one interviews,



focus groups and meetings with food entrepreneurs and Executive Director Bob Leighty the above recommended programs and services were all selected to specifically address the identified needs.

## MARKET FEASIBILITY

In 2014 Forbes listed Columbus, OH in their *Five Secret Foodie Cities* article. Per Ken Gelder, the author of *Subcultures*, “foodies prefer purchasing organic and local products compared to mass produced commodities. Also, they tend to have a distinct style of personality such as getting overly excited when talking about food or chefs, or worshipping food dishes or chefs.” As a growing foodie city, Columbus and the South Side have a strong probability of success. Per city data, the South Side of Columbus is home to 17,074 residents with a median household income of \$31,590.00<sup>8</sup> and Columbus, OH home to more than 822,000 residents with a median household income of \$40,463.00. With the focus on generating patrons from through Central Ohio, these statistics show there a potential customers base that could support the incubator. In addition, per the National Restaurant Association 2013<sup>9</sup> report on Ohio food businesses, food entrepreneurs generate substantial revenue and jobs:

- Projected to generate \$18.3 billion in sales by 2015.
- Projected to generate 557,200 (or 10% of employment) by 2015.
- Every \$1 million spent in Ohio’s restaurants generates an additional 28.4 jobs within the state.

By combining residents and food entrepreneurs with formalized mentoring, education and training programs, the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus has a strong potential of increasing the success rate and viability of food businesses thereby economically impacting the area. Per NPR article, “*with the booming demand for specialty and artisanal foods, incubators can help hungry entrepreneurs get started in a licensed kitchen at a fraction of the price of leasing their own space.*”<sup>10</sup>

A strong marketing plan will be instrumental in spreading the word of the centers unique programs overcoming the safety concern and highlighting the third places community. Recommendation is to develop a full-blown marketing plan and marketing calendar for implementation. Defining three avenues of spreading the marketing message to the foodie community along with the area residents will be essential.

## OPERATIONS FEASIBILITY

We do not feel that the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus has to own and manage all the pieces and parts. Partnering with existing organizations around Central Ohio, organizations with a proven track record in fresh food industries, would be a viable option for providing services with minimal risk and without added overhead and cost. PAMA, in partnership with local businesses and resources, should promote and market the food campus, leveraging marketing skills provided by individual partners such as Luna Burger, Folsom & Pine Farm, A&R Creatives, Local Matters, OSU Extension, Franklin Park Conservatory, and others. By placing the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus under the direction of PAMA, it will keep the focus on economic development of the neighborhood along with food production. PAMA Executive Director Bob Leighty has strong ties within the neighborhood along with non-profit organizations and food entrepreneurs. Organizations such as Luna Burger assisting with manufacturing, the Women’s Small Business Accelerator and Local Matters assisting with training and education, and Folsom and Pine assisting with growing healthy food could contribute to the success rate of the incubator. By partnering with outside organizations the South Columbus Fresh Food

Campus will be able to lower operational expenses and bring together a strong community of volunteers to assist with the various aspects of the campus.

## **LOCATION FEASIBILITY**

Several South Columbus locations were evaluated for components of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. Building on the recent public-private investment in the Southern Gateway area and Parsons Avenue corridor, three leading initial locations for development appear to be the land north and west of the Maloney Health Center, and the land north of Mae's Produce on Marion Road. Working with PAMA and the campus stakeholders, initially developing these three locations for the campus will help the community achieve several broad goals for South Columbus:

- Safety, Neighborhood Interaction both East and West of Parsons: Pedestrian Crosswalks/Lights for Safe Crossing of Parsons Avenue and Reeb Avenue.
- Economic Development: Potential for Retail Expansions along Parsons.
- Economic Development: Potential for Food Production, Storage, Distribution along Marion Road.
- Economic Development: Workforce Development and Entrepreneurship Training for South Columbus and Other Residents in the Central Ohio Region.
- Community Health and Civic Pride: Healthy, fresh, innovative food becomes part of the marketing strategy for PAMA and Parsons and South Columbus.
- Health, Economic Development: Major effort to develop logistics (storage, production, and distribution) methods to ensure affordable healthy food for South Columbus and Central Ohio Region.
- Supporting Previous/Current Public/Private Investments in South Columbus: Strong Connection and Marketing Support for Mid-Ohio Foodbank's South Side Roots Café and Market at Reeb Avenue Center, and to Mae's Produce.
- Economic Development: Opportunity for Growing Produce and Manufacturing Value-Added Food Products for sale to Local Institutions, such as Nationwide Children's Hospital and Mid-Ohio Foodbank, keeping food growing and manufacturing/production dollars local.

## **FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY**

As the locations and partners and programming are finalized for the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus, solid financial projections will need to be determined for each revenue stream. A full business plan will need to be developed by PAMA and campus partners in order to define the specifics of the business.

After researching the incubator industry, food industry, hosting one-on-one interviews and focus groups, and researching the needs of the neighborhood, we believe that a food incubator located within or around Parsons Avenue has an opportunity to be successful as long as it meets the needs of both target markets, is effectively monetized to generate revenue and cover expenses, and has strong community partnerships for assistance and volunteers.







## **SURVEY RESPONSES PROVIDED BY:**

### **ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS**

- Audrey Todd, Food For Good Thought
- Brian Williams, MORPC
- Charly Bauer, Jeni's Splendid Ice Cream
- Ellen Williams, Godman Guild
- Joel Teaford, PARC
- Mark Schieber, Schieber Associates
- Rick Wolfe, North Market
- State Representative Michael Stinziano
- Brian Higgins, Arch City Development and PARC
- Bruce Massa, Continental Realty
- Elizabeth Lessner, Columbus Food League
- Jeff May, Scrambler Maries, JMM Real Estate
- Mark Barbash, Finance Fund
- Michelle Moskowitz Brown, Local Matters
- Roberta Bishop, South Side Learning and Development Center

### **FOCUS GROUPS**

- Angela Mingo, Nationwide Children's Hospital
- Carolyn Smith, South Columbus resident
- Eri Synk, South Columbus resident, Representative South Side Area Commission
- Judy Czarnecki, Southside Gateway consultant
- Megan and Barbie Luna, South Columbus Residents, owners and operators of Luna Burger
- Carla Fountaine, Nationwide Insurance
- Chuck Lynd, SSL&DC, Sole Coalition
- Joel Cosme, Jr., South Columbus resident, Community Grounds
- Lynn Stan, Celebrate Local, Near Eastside Cooperative Market
- Shiloh Todorov, German Village Society



L.P.G.

## ABOUT YOUR MANAGEMENT TEAM, INC.

About Your Management Team, Inc. YMT has been providing consulting and business development services to small businesses and organizations since 2008. Your Management Team assists entrepreneurs to define and develop their business ideas, develop and implement processes and procedures for growth, write and utilize effective business plans, strategies plans and feasibility studies, and develops and implements entrepreneurial training and education. You can learn more at <http://yourmanagementteam.com>.

### (Endnotes)

- 1 City of Columbus. (2014), Roadmap to Revitalization, Southern Gateway Community Report, May 2014.
- 2 Local Matters. (2014), Visions for a Healthier Community, Full Report – Near South Side Food Access Work Group.
- 3 Econsult Solutions. (2013), U.S. Kitchen Incubators: An Industry Snapshot.
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- 5 Econsult Solutions. (2013), U.S. Kitchen Incubators: An Industry Snapshot.
- 6 Food Product Design. (2014). Food, Beverage Industry Poised for Growth in 2014. <http://www.foodproductdesign.com/blogs/trending-foods/2014/06/food-beverage-industry-poised-for-growth-in-2014.aspx>
- 7 The Wall Street Journal (2015), Reviving The General Store. <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702303433304579304493330208418>
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- 9 National Restaurant Association (2013). Ohio Restaurant Industry at a Glance. [http://www.restaurant.org/Downloads/PDFs/State-Statistics/2015/OH\\_Restaurants2015](http://www.restaurant.org/Downloads/PDFs/State-Statistics/2015/OH_Restaurants2015)
- 10 NPR. (2014). For Food startups, Incubators Help Dish Up Success. <http://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2014/08/18/336877182/for-food-start-ups-incubators-help-dish-up-success>







# 1 APPENDIX A EQUIPMENT COST ESTIMATES FOR LUNA BURGER PLANT PROCESSING FACILITY

## Cost Estimates for Equipment in Luna Burger Plant Processing Facility

A proposed facility could incorporate a Local Themed Pop-Up Restaurant (something like Acre or Patty Cakes' "City Beet" - a veggie diner), a Retail Store (like Celebrate Local) with emphasis on local produce and products made in house. Office Space for local groups/agencies ( like Local Matters) – a Large Community Room as well as additional meeting rooms/class rooms - to host events, classes, gatherings, etc.

Estimated pricing to develop such a facility is as follows and is a guestimate based up online searches:

1. The equipment needs to be large enough to handle potential capacity/growth but small enough for job training & job creation.

- Processing Kitchen (approximately 3000 sq ft) - Walk in Freezer and Fridge (8x10 each) (\$7,000 fridge/ \$8,000 freezer) - 2 Large veggie chopper/processor (\$40,000) - 100 gal steam kettle with steam baskets - for beans and blanching veggies (\$40,000) - Grain/Rice Cooker(s) (3 for \$2000) - Rolling rack oven (\$20,000) - Tunnel/Spiral Freezer (\$75,000) - Heat sealer(s) (\$1000) - 2 two compartment sink/produce washing stations (\$1000) - Dish area w/ dish machine and 3 compartment sink (\$10,000) - Plenty of prep tables and shelving (\$2,000) - Grease Trap (\$3,000 - including installation) - Hood/ventilation/fire suppression system (unsure if we would need a hood - the rest would go into building design) - Truth window to community room - Plenty of natural light.

*Total: \$209,000*

- "Root Cellar" (possibly in basement or part of warehouse). A few different temperature/ humidity controlled rooms. (\$20,000)
- Warehouse Space (approximately 5000 sq ft) - Receives and ships for entire building (including restaurant and retail space). - Receiving walk-in fridge (8x10) (\$7,000)- Shipping walk-in freezer (large enough to fit products and pallets - at least 12x20) (\$15,000), Plenty of storage for shipping materials (\$5,000) - Dry Ice storage (\$1,000) - Shipping area (i.e. tables, materials) (\$1,000) - Overhead door (part of building design), Refrigerated/ Freezer Truck - for local deliveries, Other General Building Ideas/Needs. *Total: \$29,000*
- Staff Break Room/Lockers - Restrooms (gender neutral) - Dedicated Laundry - To serve processing kitchen as well as restaurant. - Seed Vault/Library - Offices for Building staff - Classrooms for job training and food education - A teaching kitchen in corner of community room - could be closed off for a smaller group or opened up for a large event. - Tool Room with outdoor access - Small compost, trash, and recycling area accessible to both the processing kitchen and restaurant. - Larger compost area near green house(s) - Outdoor cleaning/packing station for greenhouse or edible forest produce - Large outdoor patio adjacent to restaurant and back of the building (off of community room) with lots of outdoor seating. - Covered "stalls" in the parking lot median to house events/FM/sales in the summer time. - Green design!!

## 2 APPENDIX B TENANTS OF LUNA BURGER PLANT PROCESSING FACILITY

### Possible additional users of Luna Burger Plant Processing Facility

- Fulsom & Pine, Jeremy Priwer & Lori Fry  
6001 Lambert Rd., Orient OH 43146  
20 plus greenhouse operation, chile pepper sauces, value added products
- Sippel Family Farm, Ben & Lisa Sippel  
6398 State Route 19, Mount Gilead OH 43338  
70+ acre vegetable farm, tomatoes for canning/freezing, any other 2nds for preserving
- Wayward Seed Farm, Jaime Moore, Adam Welly, Adam Utley  
PO Box 527, Worthington OH 43085  
(multiple locations in central OH), sweet potatoes, carrots, other vegetables for preserving
- Rock Dove Farms, Todd Schriver  
5319 St. Rte. 142, West Jefferson OH 432162  
possibly dried herbs, frozen greens
- RainFresh Harvests, Barry Adler  
9559 Industrial Parkway, Plain City OH 43064  
herbs, especially for basil/pesto as a value added product
- Great River Organics  
3 of the above Farms, plus 3 additional farms:
- Sunbeam Family Farm Alexandria OH; Harvest Sun Farms New Knoxville OH; Toad Hill Farms Danville OH, Michael Jones  
4561 E. 5th Ave, Columbus OH 43219  
aggregator & multi-farm CSA, Coordinate to preserve excess produce
- Ag Access, Karl Knopp  
9297 Olga Dr, Streetsboro OH 44241  
small scale distributor who works with numerous farms, looking for a way to sell/process their 2nds of vegetables and fruits of all kinds

### Mid-Ohio Foodbank Urban Farms of Central Ohio's

- Clarfield Farm, Dana Hilfinger, manager  
3220 Groveport Rd., Columbus OH 43207
- Mid-Ohio Foodbank itself, non-local, but excess or overripe produce that doesn't have time to get distributed

### Other urban and community growers with excess or non-salable produce

- Four Seasons City Farms, Old First Presbyterian Church



1101 Bryden Rd, Columbus OH 43205

numerous urban sites with the capacity to produce for wholesale/preservation

- Franklinton Gardens

909 W. Rich St, Columbus OH 43222

numerous urban sites with the capacity to produce for wholesale/preservation

- And others in our neighborhood who may have excess vegetables needing preservation.

We could work with smaller distributors of local fruits and vegetables, both as a distributor of our preserved goods and as a supplier of local fruits and veggies in their stock that they can no longer sell. Jeff Givens is the local project guy at San Fillipo Produce, right by Great River at the produce terminal. He has a lot of farmer contacts who have this same issue with 2nds—non-pretty, but totally edible veggies and fruits—and will be a good resource as we move forward.

### 3 APPENDIX C THE COMMISSARY – SOUTH

**Kitchen for scaling up food products and supporting The Commissary on Dublin Road.** <http://www.thecommissarycolumbus.com/>

A Scale-Up Commercial Kitchen for hire with unique value added services.

- A kitchen space designed to assist small businesses scaling up their production while minimizing risk (by mitigating need to acquire/build larger facilities, hire an entire staff, or hire from a riskier employment pool).
- A place that is safe to try something bigger (beginning to wholesale, taking on newer and bigger clients, releasing new product lines).
- An employer that can help train and develop a workforce hired from the neighborhood.
- A community kitchen that can provide space for classes, training, wellness seminars, outreach.

The ideal client would be a small food business that has already established a strong market base, a solid product line, tested recipes and processes, and a growing brand. This user would be entering new markets and is ready to have a workforce produce recipes that meet their quality standards. Startups are also supported.

With this Parsons Avenue kitchen/restaurant wholesaler, staff could and should be recruited and hired from the Parsons area neighborhoods.

#### **Equipment list:**

- A bank of ovens
- A large steam jacket kettle (40 gallon and up)
- Tilt skillet
- 6-burner ranges
- VCM
- Blast chiller
- Refrigerator/freezer options



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**Possibilities:**

- Steamers
- Sheeter
- Fryer
- Packaging equipment (vacuum sealer, fill station with compressed air - there are a lot of directions that this could go).

Having at least 600-1000 sq ft of the kitchen space separated from the rest with sinks, prep tables, induction burners, refrigeration, and smallwares would allow for community outreach opportunities. When not being used for classes and workshops, it could be used for additional work space.

## **4 APPENDIX D SOUTH COLUMBUS WORKFORCE & ENTREPRENEURISM CENTER**

Shared offices and classrooms with programming for PAMA, Luna Burger, Local Matters, OSU Extension, 4-H, OSU Kirwan Institute, Franklin County, Columbus City Schools Adult & Community Education, Women's Small Business Accelerator, Columbus Small Business Development Center, Franklin University, Columbus College of Art & Design, Your Management Team, local food brokers, and a new seed vault library. Green roof and/or solar panels on building. <http://www.ccsch.us/AboutACE.aspx> , <http://guides.franklin.edu/profile.php?uid=90070>

## **5 APPENDIX E SOUTH COLUMBUS EDIBLE FOREST**

Teaching facility operated by Folsom & Pine Farms, with support from Luna Burger, OSU Extension, Franklin Park Conservatory, and Mid-Ohio Food Bank. Berries, fruits, and nuts. Possible Folsom & Pine greenhouse.

Edible Forest model <http://www.beaconfoodforest.org/> . OSU Extension contact <http://fic.osu.edu/members/directory/h/hogan-mike.html> , <http://www.columbus.gov/blueprint/>

## **6 APPENDIX F MARION ROAD COMPLEX**

### **1. Mae's Produce (In Operation Over 38 Years)**

### **2. All Seasons Food Park**

**Folsom & Pine Greenhouses** and **other privately funding hydroponic shipping containers** for growing seedlings for local gardeners, and for growing vegetables and berries for sale to local restaurants and institutions, such as Nationwide Children's Hospital, Reeb Community Center (Mid-Ohio Foodbank operating a kitchen, market, restaurant), and A & R restaurants and markets. <http://folsom-pine-llc.myshopify.com/> , <http://www.arcgcolumbus.com/>



## 7 APPENDIX G PROGRAMMING SUMMARY FOR SOUTH COLUMBUS FRESH FOOD CAMPUS

**General Mission:** Help people integrate beans, grains, vegetable, fruits, nuts, seeds into their everyday eating and living, and train people on workforce development and entrepreneurship skills, especially involving fresh food products and services.

The campus has a processing center, a store, a pop-up lunch place, and plenty of gathering spaces and offices. Processing Center is separated from public space by large windows, so people can observe food processing. Lots of steel and glass, two of the original industries of South Columbus.

The processing center is in the building for several different reasons. 1) It brings people to the building. Farmers deliver to the building. Neighbors work or participate in job training at the building. People see activity that inspires interest and those coming and going build a comfort with the building.

The store: It's got to be different than the Reeb Community Center store, and also different from Mae's Produce. Sticking with the focus of the campus, the store will carry value added products and the preserved local products made in the processing center. Also, a large wall of bulk local staple foods like beans, grains, flours, nuts, etc. And, plenty of information about where things were grown and recipes on how to use each ingredient. A window into the processing center would also be cool to help people continue to connect the dots

We see the mission of the campus to make local produce (i.e. vegetables, fruit, beans, grains, nuts, seeds) affordable and accessible to South Columbus neighborhoods first and then to the Greater Columbus area through educational programming, collaborations, job training.

Purchasing seconds from small to medium size local farmers and growers would allow the processing center to preserve those ingredients or create value added ingredients at an affordable rate. It also serves to support local growers and makes their farms more sustainable for the long haul knowing they have an outlet for their entire crop.

Lots of community collaborations would happen here. Neighborhood garden clubs, South Side Community Garden Network, Local Matters Programing, OSU Extension Programming, 4-H clubs, working with local schools, churches, neighbors on growing, preserving, and preparing foods from local produce, Seed Vault/Library, Weekly Pancake Breakfast.

And an edible landscape around the building...fruit trees and bushes, perennial herbs, etc.

**Education and activities surrounding cooking, growing, preserving, eating, sharing, working with and buying local produce.**

### **Cooking:**

- Local Matters programming
- 4-H/OSU Extension programming
- Columbus Public Schools culinary programming
- Neighborhood cooking classes
- Cooking events: chef battles like the Cooking Caravan, value-added food product competitions, etc.

### **Growing:**

- Edible Forest
- Fulsom & Pine Greenhouses
- Franklin Park Conservatory/Growing to Green programming
- Local Matters programming
- A & R Shipping container growing

- Community Garden network & support
- Home garden education & support, network; edible landscaping
- Seed Saving, starting, plant sales
- Tool and resource library (also include cooking, preserving, health and wellness topics)

#### **Preserving:**

- Local farm & south side-grown food preservation program-frozen products, canned products, dried foods, value-added goods
- Small scale home-preservation classes with above methods
- Root cellar

#### **Eating:**

- Edible Forest & Greenhouse educational sampling
- Cafe/restaurant serving grain & bean based dishes
- Special events, e.g. pancake breakfasts, neighborhood events hosted on site
- Catering to groups/meetings on site
- Shipping container food court; rentable pop-up spaces with affordable healthy foods

#### **Sharing:**

- Campus tours
- Collaborative spirit of the project
- Shared community space, indoor & outdoor, for gathering
- Creating/inspiring a sense of ownership & connectedness to the campus/projects

#### **Working:**

- Job-training/actual jobs in: the processing center, cafe, grounds/greenhouse, retail store, building administration, warehouse/distribution
- Other skills training: general workforce development, entrepreneurship training
- Incubator kitchen/rentable catering kitchen
- Co-packing kitchen to co-pack mission-specific products
- Working with entrepreneurs to scale-up their businesses: batch sizes, commercial equipment, sourcing ingredients, labeling and packaging requirements, licensing needs, etc.

#### **Buying:**

- Retail Store with: all the value added and preserved goods prepared on site, dry staple foods w/ bulk access, root cellar foods
- Other retail events hosted on site







## 8 APPENDIX H OHIO FOOD HUBS AND OTHER PROJECTS

### New Cleveland Food Hub Under Construction

<http://www.stclairsuperior.org/neighborhoods/st-clair-neighborhood/hub-55/>

### Columbus Food Hubs and Other Food Business Resources

- Columbus

<http://www.northmarket.com/>

<http://thefooddistrict.org/> ,

<http://www.franklintongardens.org/>

<http://liveunitedcentralohio.org/agencies-initiatives/initiatives/fresh-foods-here/>

<http://www.thecommissarycolumbus.com/> ,

<http://www.unitedprovisionmeatcompany.com/page2>

<https://communitygarden.org/find-a-garden/gardens/kossuth-street-commonwealth-garden/> ,

<https://www.facebook.com/FourSeasonsCityFarm> ,

<http://www.thefoodfort.com/> ,

<http://www.csc.edu/academics/departments/hospitality/culinary-apprentice.shtml> ,

<http://fst.osu.edu/about-us/facilities> ,

<http://fic.osu.edu/>

### Other Ohio Food Hubs

- Cleveland

<http://www.westsidemarket.org/about.html> , <http://evergreencooperatives.com/business/green-city-growers/>

- Athens

<http://www.acenetworks.org/>

- Bowling Green

<http://ciftinnovation.org/>

## 9 APPENDIX I FOOD HUBS AND CREATIVE FOOD INITIATIVES OTHER STATES

- National Good Food Network  
<http://www.ngfn.org/resources/food-hubs>
- Pittsburgh  
<http://www.neighborsinthestrip.com/>
- Buffalo  
<http://wilsonstreeturbanfarm.wordpress.com/> , <http://mass-ave.org/>
- Oakland  
<http://www.peoplesgrocery.org/> , <http://www.mandelafoods.com/> , <http://www.mandelamarketplace.org/> ,  
<http://www.cityslickerfarms.org/> , <http://anvfarm.org/> , <http://www.plantingjustice.org/>
- Berkeley  
<http://www.chezpanisse.com/about/alice-waters/>
- Philadelphia  
<http://theenterprisecenter.com/>  
<http://theenterprisecenter.com/cc/>  
<http://thefoodtrust.org/> , [http://www.philadelphiacontroller.org/publications/AnchorInstitutions\\_January2014\\_web.pdf](http://www.philadelphiacontroller.org/publications/AnchorInstitutions_January2014_web.pdf)
- Baltimore  
<http://www.baltimorefoodhub.com/> <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/howard/columbia/ph-ho-cf-food-policy-complete-1212-20131209,0,7001425.story>  
<http://seedstock.com/2014/02/27/east-baltimore-food-hub-plans-for-urban-revitalization-with-new-food-hub/>  
<http://baltimorepostexaminer.com/food-can-create-economic-growth-east-baltimore/2014/03/20>  
<http://www.zigersnead.com/projects/details/baltimore-food-hub/>
- Louisville  
<http://www.louisvillebarnraising.com/#/>  
<http://www.seedcapitalky.org/local-food-hub/>
- St. Louis  
<http://farmworksstl.com/>
- Seattle (Edible Forest)  
<http://www.beaconfoodforest.org/> , <http://www.pikeplacemarket.org/>
- Detroit  
<http://www.detroiteasternmarket.com/> , <http://downtowndetroit.org/live-here/district-profiles/eastern-market/>
- San Antonio  
<http://www.aia.org/practicing/awards/2014/regional-urban-design/pearl-brewery/>

## 10 APPENDIX J SUPPORT LETTERS



To whom it may concern,

My name is Abed Alshahal, I am one of the co-owners of A&R creative the group behind 8 restaurants and cafes within Columbus Ohio. We have received numerous local awards and national recognition over the past few years, I say this only because this is a direct result of our community driven initiatives, local sourcing, social programming and green infrastructure. These initiatives are the at the core of what have helped our country climb out of a recession and make people aware of the issues surrounding us, which has connected us on the local scale. Food, environment and community are the heart of what drive our communities and inspire people to make change.

It is for this reason we are in Strong support of PAMA and consider them one of our most important strategic partners due to their grassroots community organizing and strong focus on strengthening Columbus's local food system.

We have identified a form of food processing/ shelf life extension that will be synergistic with the food campus. A food campus within the south side (our backyard) could be the missing link to make Columbus a strong exporter of value added products. The campus could be the catalyst for established entrepreneurs to make a national presence and give aspiring entrepreneurs the tools and inspiration to start their own businesses and social enterprises. Columbus is known for its geographic placement for efficient distribution within the United States, a fresh food campus could be he domino that will make it a national exporter and will also help solve local fresh food access issues, stimulate the local economy and keep the food sovereignty movement moving forward.

Thank you for your time

Abed Alshahal.



# CREATIVE COMMUNITY.

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to express CCAD's support of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus project. It is a creative proposal to increase access to healthy food and to support workforce development and food entrepreneurs. We want to explore with PAMA possible projects for our students, including helping South Columbus food entrepreneurs by providing assistance with their packaging designs and marketing strategies. We also may be able to have our students help PAMA with the design of their new South Columbus Visitor Center, which will include information about the Edible Forest, South Side Roots Café and Market, social support services in Reeb Avenue Center, Mae's Produce, South Columbus Fresh Food Campus classes and programs, local businesses, neighborhood events, senior services, and COTA schedules.

We look forward to working with PAMA to further define our role and participation with this important project.

Sincerely yours,



Kevin Conlon  
Provost and Interim President



Columbus College of Art & Design

Office of the President

60 Cleveland Ave. Columbus OH 43215  
P 614.224.9101 F 614.222.4040  
[www.ccad.edu](http://www.ccad.edu)



**Pegeen Cleary Potts, Executive Director**  
**Career-Technical Education, Workforce Development and**  
**Adult and Community Education**

Columbus City Schools, Ft. Hayes Career Center  
546 Jack Gibbs Boulevard, Columbus, OH 43215  
Ph. 614-365-6681 ext. 3070 Fax 614-365-8334  
pcleary9052@columbus.k12.oh.us

---

*Mission: Each student is highly educated, prepared for leadership and service, and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community.*

---

June 24, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the Columbus City Schools Department of Career-Technical Education, Workforce Development and Adult & Community Education for development of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus.

Our Career and Technical Education program offers traditional high school students culinary arts and information technology programs. We see great opportunities in neighborhoods for collaboration. The proposed South Columbus Fresh Food Campus supports areas such as culinary arts, multimedia, information technology and health occupations.

We see opportunities for student internships via the Parsons Avenue Merchants Association. The Plant at the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus supports **Luna Burger Kitchen & Production Facility**, the **Luna Fruit & Root Cellar**, and **The Plant Food General Store**.

Additionally, there are opportunities for students to become involved supporting South Columbus businesses, like Mae's Produce and South Side Roots Cafe and Market. We also see possible involvement in produce growing programs such as hydroponics and the Edible Forest which supports nutrition education in our health occupational training program.

As the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus develops, we look forward to working with PAMA and other food business partners. Our goal is to further define our role and participation with this important project.

Sincerely,

**Pegeen Cleary Potts, Executive Director**  
Columbus City Schools Career-Technical Education  
Workforce Development and Adult & Community Education  
Ft. Hayes Career Center, 546 Jack Gibbs Blvd., Columbus, Ohio 43215  
Ph: 614-365-6681 ext. 3070, Fax: 614-365-8334

The Columbus City School District does not discriminate based sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, ancestry, familial status or military status with regard to admission, access, treatment or employment. This policy is applicable in all district programs and activities.



June 21, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Simply Living is pleased to support the Parsons Avenue Merchants Association (PAMA) in their proposal to establish a South Side Fresh Food Campus. We have followed the planning process, and I personally participated in a focus group that explored the feasibility of the Food Incubator. Simply Living wants to participate in what we expect will become a national model for Food Hubs that serve both community residents and entrepreneurial-based, local economic development.

First, we are currently in the process of developing Simply Living Sustainable University (SLSU), a new initiative that is based upon a distributed campus model. A one-stop website for aggregating classes and workshop trainings in central Ohio will serve as a hub for residents to learn about sustainability – including many food-related topics - offered by local organizations, agencies, and advocacy groups. Simply Living, for example, offers nationally recognized Earth Institute discussion courses, and we hope to offer these courses to residents in facilities at the future South Side Fresh Food Campus.

Simply Living is a founding partner in the Support Our Local Economy (SOLE) coalition. SOLE's mission to support local, sustainable economic development in order to revitalize neighborhoods is fully aligned with PAMA's vision for the Fresh Food Campus. SOLE Coalition partners have already expressed interest. Local Matters is exploring a strong presence on the Campus, and ECDI is a likely partner in training and funding South Side food entrepreneurs. SBB, the Small Business Beanstalk, offers neighborhood based "buy local" campaigns and incentives for residents and locally owned businesses.

PAMA's director, Bob Leighty, is a founding member of the SOLE Steering Committee. Bob keeps the SOLE Coalition informed about South Side developments. Both SOLE and Simply Living look forward to participating in the South Side Fresh Food Campus, and we will use our networks to support this important project on an ongoing basis.

Sincerely,

Chuck Lynd, Simply Living Board Member and Chair of the SOLE Coalition



July 7, 2015

Bob Leighty  
Parsons Avenue Merchants Association  
831 Parsons Ave.  
Columbus, Ohio 43206

Dear Mr. Leighty:

This letter is in support of the plan for a South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. By empowering people and neighborhoods to improve their health, the proposed project has the potential to improve the social determinants of health for residents living on the south side of Columbus. Through increased access to healthy food and job training opportunities, the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus provides a unique opportunity for Columbus Public Health to collaborate with residents, community stakeholders and policy-makers to address local gaps in public health, specifically addressing the issues of overweight and obesity and infant mortality.

Columbus Public Health is pleased to support the Parsons Avenue Merchants Association in this effort to make the healthy choice the easy choice for residents living in the neighborhoods surrounding the Southern Gateway area.

Yours in good health,



Teresa C. Long, MD, MPH  
Health Commissioner

TCL/tma



**GREG J. DAVIES**  
Director

June 12, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

The Department of Public Utilities is currently piloting a new approach to eliminating sewer overflows, known as Blueprint Columbus. The key to Blueprint is managing stormwater to prevent it from entering sanitary sewers. Blueprint Columbus will involve creating significant amounts of green infrastructure, such as bioswales and rain gardens.

The proposed South Columbus Fresh Food Campus is in an area where we will eventually be applying Blueprint. As part of the efforts to plan for and develop this innovative food campus, we are in discussions with PAMA to explore building green infrastructure for the campus, and in particular the Edible Forest project. While we cannot commit to anything specific at this time, we definitely see a potential opportunity with this site.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Susan E. Ashbrook  
Assistant Director/Sustainability  
Department of Public Utilities  
City of Columbus



**Customer Service | Telephone (614)645-8276 | Fax (614)645-0222 | TDD (614)645-7188**  
Power Division | 3500 Indianola Avenue | Columbus, OH 43214 | Telephone (614)645-8371 | Fax (614)645-7830  
Sewerage and Drainage Division | 1250 Fairwood Avenue | Columbus, OH 43206 | Telephone (614)645-7175 | Fax (614)645-3801  
Water Division | Administration | 910 Dublin Road, Room 3004 | Columbus OH 43215 | Telephone (614)645-7020 | Fax (614)645-3993  
Director's Office | 910 Dublin Road | Columbus, OH 43215 | Telephone (614)645-6141 | Fax (614)645-8019  
columbus.gov

The Commissary  
1400 Dublin Road, Columbus, OH 43215  
614.636.3164  
youshouldbe@thecommissarycolumbus.com  
thecommissarycolumbus.com



JUNE 9, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to express the support of The Commissary for the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. As part of the campus, we are in discussions with PAMA about creating The Commissary – South, a new kitchen for scaling up food products, employing South Columbus residents, serving South Columbus and other local food entrepreneurs, and supporting The Commissary on Dublin Road. <http://www.thecommissarycolumbus.com/>

The Parsons Avenue project is the ideal situation for a commercial kitchen for hire with unique value added services:

- A kitchen space designed to assist small businesses scaling up their production while minimizing risk (by mitigating need to acquire/build larger facilities, hire an entire staff, or hire from a riskier employment pool).
- A place that is safe to try something bigger (beginning to wholesale, taking on newer and bigger clients, releasing new product lines).
- An employer that can help train and develop a workforce hired from the neighborhood.
- A community kitchen that can provide space for classes, training, wellness seminars, outreach.

The ideal client would be a small food business that has already established a strong market base, a solid product line, tested recipes and processes, and a growing brand. This user would be entering new markets and is ready to have a workforce produce recipes that meet their quality standards. Startups are also supported.

With this Parsons Avenue kitchen/restaurant wholesaler, staff could and should be recruited and hired from the Parsons Area neighborhood.

Having at least 600-1000 sq ft of the kitchen space separated from the rest with sinks, prep tables, induction burners, refrigeration, and smallwares would allow for community outreach opportunities. When not being used for classes and workshops, it could be used for additional workspace.

We also will work with PAMA to create a new South Columbus Visitor Center that includes information about the The Commissary – South, Edible Forest, South Side Roots Café and Market, social support services in Reeb Avenue Center, Mae's Produce, South Columbus Fresh Food Campus classes and programs, local businesses, neighborhood events, senior services, and COTA schedules.

We are happy to work with PAMA and our other food business in this important project.

**Sincerely, Kate Djupe**

OWNER OF THE COMMISSARY





## FOLSOM & PINE FARM

June 10, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

We are writing this letter to express our support for creation of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. We are in discussions with PAMA regarding our possible involvement with at least two major projects at the campus:

- **Folsom & Pine Greenhouses** for growing seedlings for local gardeners, and for growing vegetables and berries for sale to local restaurants and institutions, possibly including Nationwide Children's Hospital, Reeb Avenue Center (Mid-Ohio Foodbank operating a kitchen, market, restaurant), and A & R restaurants and markets. <http://folsom-pine-llc.myshopify.com/> , <http://www.arcgcolumbus.com/>
- **Edible Forest**, a development jointly operated by Folsom & Pine and Franklin Park Conservatory, with programming assistance from OSU Extension, Local Matters, and Luna Burger, as a teaching facility about berries, fruits, and nuts. We are also exploring a possible collaboration with Mid-Ohio Foodbank and the City of Columbus Blueprint Program. Edible Forest model <http://www.beaconfoodforest.org/>. Pending the success of the first site, we would consider a possible additional location near Lincoln Park Elementary and Barack Recreation Center.

We also will work with PAMA to create a new **South Columbus Visitor Center** that includes information about the Edible Forest, South Side Roots Café and Market, social support services in Reeb Avenue Center, Mae's Produce, South Columbus Fresh Food Campus classes and programs, local businesses, neighborhood events, senior services, and COTA schedules.

We look forward to working with PAMA and our other food business partners to further define our role and participation with this important project.

Sincerely,

Lori R. Fry

FOLSOM & PINE FARM

6001 Lambert Road • Orient, OH 43146

T: 614.385.4080

E: [hello@folsomandpine.com](mailto:hello@folsomandpine.com)

[folsomandpine.com](http://folsomandpine.com)



4185 North High Street/Columbus, Ohio 43214

To Whom It May Concern:

June 17, 2015

We are writing this letter to express the enthusiastic support of Food for Good Thought to the creation of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. It has been a true source of excitement for us while we explore the many ways our agency can collaborate with Parsons Avenue Merchants Association (PAMA) to enhance our local community.

We are a supported employment facility dedicated to providing vocational supports to individuals living with autism throughout central Ohio. Our main supported employment facility is a gluten-free bakery in Clintonville. Recently we have also started gardening opportunities for our clients—in response to experience and evidence that people on the autism spectrum often enjoy outside work, heavy work, and activities that stimulate their visual and tactile senses. To this end, we were thrilled when Robert Leighty shared with us the possibility of our clients working in the green house and the Edible Forest through his initiatives with the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. In fact, many rural facilities are offering these experiences to persons on the spectrum (e.g., through intentional and supported farm communities with unduly long waiting lists), and the fact that our clients could benefit from similar experiences in an urban setting—right here in Columbus—is an extraordinary opportunity for our local citizens living with autism.

In sum, we are committed to participating in the development of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus in collaboration with the many community partners committed to realizing this vital project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Audrey Todd PhD".

Audrey Todd, PhD

Chief Executive Officer

614.595.7729

Todd@FoodforGoodThought.com



June 12, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

We are writing this letter to express the support of Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens for the creation of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. It has been our pleasure exploring the many ways our organization can collaborate with Parsons Avenue Merchants Association (PAMA) and help enhance our community.

Like PAMA, the Conservatory's mission is devoted to elevating the quality of life for our surrounding communities. We do this by providing educational, cultural, and social experiences associated with horticulture, food, art and the environment. Through our outreach programs, the Conservatory is helping to create new edible gardens, city beautification projects and home gardens throughout the community. We offer food education programs that focus on healthy eating and using fresh produce. Furthermore, our Green Corps Jobs Program provides essential skills and training for young adults interested in obtaining a job in the green industry.

This work aligns well with the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. We anticipate participating in the development of the edible forest and providing educational programming alongside the many community partners committed to seeing this project become a reality.

We look forward to a continued relationship with PAMA, and applaud its determination in providing business and economic development and educational services to the South Side community.

Sincerely,

*Jenny Pope*

Jenny Pope | Director of Community Outreach and Education  
Franklin Park Conservatory & Botanical Gardens  
1777 East Broad Street | Columbus, Ohio 43203  
614.715.8026 direct line | 614.715.8199 fax

1777 East Broad Street | Columbus, OH 43203 | ph 614.715.8000 | fx 614.715.8199 | [www.fpconservatory.org](http://www.fpconservatory.org)





June 22, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to express the support of Franklinton Gardens for the creation of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. As a 2 acre urban farm in the Franklinton neighborhood, a neighborhood that largely resembles South Columbus, we are thrilled that the Parsons Avenue Merchants Association (PAMA) is engaging in this intentional process to help hyper-localize our food system in a way that will enhance our community by proving economic opportunity around neighborhood-based food system development.

Over the past 7 years, Franklinton Gardens has grown from an entirely volunteer-driven grass roots community garden, into a 8-site urban farm that spans 2 acres and that maintains two full time staff people. We host a variety of programs such as a neighborhood produce stand, an 11-member Americorps VISTA program that focuses on food-health-wellness in the Franklinton neighborhood, coordinated beautification efforts, and Americorps NCCC. Our primary objective is documenting that small scale urban farming is an economically viable land use activity in Columbus. The South Columbus Fresh Food Campus would be a great complement to local food production in that it will facilitate the creation of value added products from local produce, and it will help create awareness and market opportunity for local producers. In conjunction with the Franklinton Board of Trade, Franklinton Gardens has begun working with PAMA to determine how Franklinton and South Columbus can work together to boost economic development in both neighborhoods

We look forward to a continued relationship with PAMA, and are thrilled with it's dedication in providing holistic development services to the South Side community.

Sincerely,

Nick Stanich  
Executive Director, Franklinton Gardens

# JMM REAL ESTATE

JMM REAL ESTATE INVESTMENTS, INC.

June 8, 2015.

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter expresses the support of JMM Real Estate for development of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus.

We are delighted to see PAMA putting together a creative plan for this important new food campus development. Having done business in South Columbus for over 30 years, I believe that this new development will have a transformational impact on South Columbus and our region. We look forward to working with PAMA and our other business partners to further define our role and participation with this important project.

Sincerely,

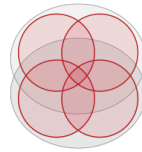


Jeff May

President

P.O. BOX 247, CANAL WINCHESTER, OH. 43110  
PHONE 614-582-1992 FAX 614-833-1190

June 12, 2015



**KIRWAN INSTITUTE**  
for the Study of Race and Ethnicity

To Whom it May Concern,

This letter is in support of the plan for a South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. Kirwan Institute works to create a just and inclusive society where all people and communities have the opportunity to succeed. For more than a decade, we have been working to address racial and economic inequities in communities. As an applied research institute with the Ohio State University, Kirwan Institute has been deeply engaged in the revitalization efforts of the South Side for the past two years. We believe the food campus represents an innovative and important economic, health and “third places” intervention for the South Side. We look forward to working with PAMA and other committed community partners seeking positive, transformative change in the South Side.

Sincerely,

Jason Reece

Director of Research, Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race & Ethnicity  
Lecturer, City & Regional Planning Program, Knowlton School of Architecture  
The Ohio State University

Jillian Olinger

Public Policy and Planning Analyst, Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race & Ethnicity  
The Ohio State University



# Local Matters

June 18, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to express the support of Local Matters for the creation of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus.

Local Matters is a Columbus based non-profit founded in 2008 in response to the projection that the current generation of children would have a shorter life expectancy than their parents, due to obesity and diet-related diseases. Through our programming, we teach families, adults and children at-risk of hunger and chronic disease where healthful food comes from, how to grow it, how to cook it, and how to access it affordably. We also work on a city and county-wide level to improve food access and develop community-based food plans.

Our mission and vision aligns with Parsons Avenue Merchants Association (PAMA), as we are both investing in the health and wellness of Columbus and its surrounding communities. As we work to improve health outcomes through increasing access to and education about healthful foods, PAMA creates initiatives that support positive opportunities and increases access to a multitude of resources for the community members.

We are intending to move the Local Matters offices to the Southside at the end of this year, and similar to the many community partners, are committed to seeing this project come to fruition. The South Columbus Fresh Food Campus would provide needed kitchen space for Local Matters to support healthful food education and access for over 10,000 individuals in Columbus and beyond. Currently, we rent a kitchen on Broad St. but with our office moving, we would greatly prefer to house our prep kitchen on the Southside and benefit from the synergy of multiple food-based businesses.

Local Matters looks forward to a continued partnership with PAMA and is thankful for the opportunities it creates for residents of the Southside.

Sincerely,



Michelle Moskowitz Brown  
Executive Director

731 E. Broad St.—3<sup>rd</sup> Floor | Columbus, OH 43205 | 614/263-5662  
[www.local-matters.org](http://www.local-matters.org)



June 1, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter expresses the support of Luna Burger for development of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus.

Our current plan is to relocate our production kitchen to a new and expanded facility in the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. With an emphasis on local, healthy, plant-based foods, we're envisioning a new facility named **The Plant** with kitchen, production, storage and distribution for Luna Burger along with a job training program, and many educational opportunities to learn, taste, grow, preserve, and share local plant-based foods. We'll also create **The Luna Fruit & Root Cellar**, which will provide storage and research equipment for extending the growing season and improve production and preservation methods to provide access to Ohio healthy foods year-round. We currently produce about 1500-2000 burgers a day, and we are planning for growth at our new South Columbus location.

We will also work with PAMA to create **The Plant General Store**, which will provide retail for locally-produced value-added food products and affordable bulk food, and a pop-up restaurant dining area, complementing Mae's Produce and South Side Roots Cafe and Market. We will work with PAMA to create a new **South Columbus Visitor Center** that includes information about South Side Roots Café and Market, social support services in Reeb Avenue Center, Mae's Produce, South Columbus Fresh Food Campus classes and programs, local businesses, neighborhood events, senior services, and COTA schedules.

We look forward to working with PAMA and our other food business partners to further define our role and participation with this important project.

Sincerely,

Barbie Luna  
Co-Owner  
Luna Burger

Megan Luna  
Co-Owner  
Luna Burger

5760 Westbourne Ave. Columbus, OH 43213  
614-634-6790



Mid-Ohio Foodbank  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

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**BRIAN JEPSON**  
Riverside Methodist Hospital

**TREY JOHNSON**  
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American Electric Power

**CHERYL A. McCORMICK**  
The Kroger Company

**BOBBY D. MOSER**  
The Ohio State University

**WILLIAM P. OWAD, JR.**  
Cardinal Health

**MYSHEIKA WILLIAMS ROBERTS**  
Columbus Public Health

**RICH ROSEN**  
Indigo Strategies

**MARK STEWART**  
Alliance Data, retired

**ARIANA ULLOA-OLAVARRIETA**  
Columbus State Community College

**JAN VALENTIC**  
The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company

**KIRT WALKER**  
Nationwide

STAFF  
**MATT HABASH**  
President & CEO

3960 Brookham Drive  
Grove City, Ohio 43123  
614.274.7770  
[info@midohiofoodbank.org](mailto:info@midohiofoodbank.org)  
[www.midohiofoodbank.org](http://www.midohiofoodbank.org)

**FEEDING**  
AMERICA  
A member of

June 23, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to express our support of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus feasibility project.

When you compare the mortality rates in South Columbus with the mortality rates in the rest of Franklin County, it is clear that intervention is needed to boost the health of South Columbus residents. Affordable access to healthy foods is a piece of that puzzle, and that is why we are creating the South Side Roots Café and Market in the Reeb Avenue Center. Everyone eats, and having access to fresh, healthy foods is essential to health. Likewise, having the ability to ‘break bread’ in community builds understanding among people of diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Relationships build healthy communities, and learning about and enjoying healthy and affordable food in a community-gathering place is a wonderful way to build and strengthen relationships. The South Columbus Fresh Food Campus will further expand upon the foundation that we are building with the Reeb Avenue Center.

With the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus, PAMA and Luna Burger and their partners will create **The Plant Food General Store**, which will provide retail for locally-produced value-added food products and affordable bulk food, and a pop-up restaurant dining area, all of which will complement the long-established Mae’s Produce and our new South Side Roots Cafe and Market. We also support PAMA’s efforts to create a new **South Columbus Visitor Center** that includes information about our South Side Roots Café and Market, the social support services in Reeb Avenue Center, Mae’s Produce, South Columbus Fresh Food Campus classes and programs, local businesses, neighborhood events, senior services, and COTA schedules.

While the challenges of poverty and hunger in South Columbus are complex, we believe they can be resolved with holistic, collaborative and long-term efforts. We need to help our families’ better support themselves through providing adequate resources and opportunities to create family stability.

Mid-Ohio Foodbank is proud to bring the innovative South Side Roots Café and Market to the Reeb Avenue Center in South Columbus, and to work with the various food-related projects and stakeholders in the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus.

Sincerely yours,

Kimberly Dorniden  
Chief Officer; Strategic &  
Organizational Development  
Mid-Ohio Foodbank  
614-317-9468





Mid-Ohio Regional  
Planning Commission

111 Liberty Street, Suite 100  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

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[www.morpc.org](http://www.morpc.org)

June 29, 2015

Bob Leighty, Executive Director  
Parsons Avenue Merchants Association  
831 Parsons Ave  
Columbus, OH 43206

Subject: Support letter for South Columbus Fresh Food Campus Development

Dear Mr. Leighty:

I am writing this letter to express the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's support for the Parsons Avenue Merchants Association's (PAMA) development of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus.

The South Columbus Fresh Food Campus is a thoughtful, collaborative initiative that will help boost economic development in South Columbus in a way that is mindful of and consistent with MORPC's efforts to build a new, strong Central Ohio local food infrastructure. When MORPC's *Central Ohio Local Food Assessment and Plan* was released in April 2010, it presented a frank look at the challenges and opportunities that exist to create a sustainable local and healthy food infrastructure in the Central Ohio region's 12 counties.

To implement the recommendations in the plan cities, counties, individual neighborhoods, community organizations and other stakeholders need to step up and develop their own unique roles and partnerships involving food growing, production, processing, and wholesale and retail sales. Several Central Ohio initiatives are making progress, including the Franklinton Gardens, the ECDI Food Fort, the Commissary, and planning for the Food District @ Weinland Park.

PAMA and MORPC have a valuable partnership in local-food planning at the neighborhood and regional levels. PAMA consistently consults with MORPC to make sure plans for the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus fit MORPC's broader interest, even as they helped MORPC shape the regional initiatives.

We are excited about working with PAMA and our other food business partners to further define our role and participation with this important project.

Kind Regards,

William Murdock

William Murdock, AICP  
Executive Director

Eric S. Phillips  
Chair

Matt Greeson  
Vice Chair

Rory McGuinness  
Secretary

**AES MANAGEMENT GROUP**  
520 South State Street  
Suite 112-B  
Westerville, OH 43081  
614.832.6128

To whom it may concern,

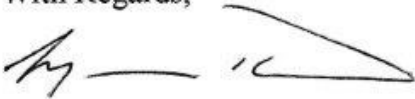
The proposed South Columbus Fresh Food Campus reflects a vision that will serve as a true opportunity to bring support to up and coming entrepreneurs.

Columbus is a vibrant city with many talented people that have a dream a vision and the desire to build a business locally and contribute to the community.

A Fresh Food Campus will offer these talented folks a support group a solid base of operations and opportunities to not only live their dream but to make a difference in our community. As a food brokerage company here in Central Ohio we see the need to not only support local food manufactures but also support a campus that will legitimize their efforts.

We stand ready to support this cause and encourage other to do the same.

With Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Storer', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael Storer  
Owner  
AES Management Group  
614.832.6128



June 15, 2015

To Whom it May Concern,

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the development of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. As an organization with deep roots in agriculture and an organization within The Ohio State University that is intentionally designed to provide informal educational opportunities, the Fresh Food Campus aligns well with our expertise and programmatic capacity. In recent years several personnel from the Ohio State University Extension, Franklin County office have engaged with organizations located within this region of the city and would welcome the opportunity to strengthen our ties to the area through engagement with this work.

As a part of our goal to expand our footprint, OSU Extension - Franklin County has and continues to explore the feasibility of developing a co-located office in South Columbus. A partnership with the South Columbus Fresh Food campus will help to make this goal a reality. Furthermore, if offered the opportunity, we will work to be a strong educational partner by assisting the campus leadership with accomplishing the organization's mission, and will offer local area residents research based education to help them live happier, healthier, more prosperous lives.

Together with the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus, OSU Extension – Franklin Co. shares a common commitment. Our commitment is to improve access to healthy and nutritious foods to ALL residents regardless of their zip code, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. We are excited about this opportunity and honored to be considered as a potential partner.

The Ohio State University Extension - Franklin County office is in full support of this work. If you have any questions or would like further information regarding our involvement, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Laquore J. Meadows, Ph.D.  
County Extension Director



**REEB-HOSACK / STEELTON VILLAGE COMMITTEE**

258 HOSACK STREET - COLUMBUS, OH 43207



**A Community Advocacy Committee**

*Linda Henry - Lillie Banner Co-Chairs*

June 19, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

The Reeb-Hosack/Steelton Village Committee, a civic organization on the south side of Columbus, sends this correspondence to express our support of the creation of the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus.

Following a presentation of the proposed project at our June meeting, our membership looks forward to the implementation of the project with the possibility that it will be located within our civic boundaries. We applaud the Parsons Avenue Merchants Association for its efforts to bring such a forward thinking project to Columbus.

Over the past three years, our area of the City of Columbus has been the beneficiary of many resources that have made a significant and positive difference in our community. This project will bring a new dimension to both educational and employment opportunities and will certainly enhance efforts to make the south side of Columbus a vibrant and green community.

Sincerely,

Lillie Banner - Co-Chair  
Linda Henry - Co-Chair

c: RH/SV File  
PRIDE Center



June 22, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to express the support of The South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. The Ohio Small Business Development Centers encourage entrepreneurship and will support all small businesses including those located in the Parsons Avenue Corridor. The Ohio SBDC offers a wide array of business services and classes to assist clients who desire to participate with the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus. Some of the services include:

- BizStartNow- A three-week course for pre-venture, start-up and existing small business owners that will allow the business to address various critical areas of a business such as legal, marketing, funding and a general overview of business taxes . Through a blend of instruction, coaching and group activities you will begin to develop the structure for the business.
- Marketing- A four-week course designed to cover all aspects of marketing the small business and completing and implementing a sound marketing plan. Entrepreneurs will learn how to identify and determine their target market, build a branded message and image that works, develop marketing strategies that sell and prepare marketing presentations
- Social Media- A three-hour course designed to provide business owners with a foundation of social media knowledge to help them build better online marketing strategy and tactics to promote, create awareness and grow the business.
- Sales- A three-week course designed to lead entrepreneurs through the development of a simplified business strategy that will help them build long-term relationships and generate increased revenue by learning innovative ways to refocus and sharpen their sales approaches.
- MBE, FBE, DBE Certification Workshop- A three hour course designed to walk entrepreneurs through the application process to obtain the local, state and government Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), Female Business Enterprise (FBE) Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) certifications needed to qualify.
- From Kitchen to Market- We bring together local governing agencies, distributors, grocers and resources to provide the process and rules of compliance that need to be achieved to get the product onto the store shelves. Representatives from Columbus Public Health, Department of Agriculture, local distributors, ACEnet, Grocery stores and farm markets are scheduled to attend.
- Quickbooks for Beginners- We will discuss how to use QuickBooks, the top small business financial/accounting software. These classes are designed for Business owners planning to use QuickBooks or have just started using it. We will briefly discuss some very basic accounting principles and the pros and cons of manual vs. computerized accounting.

Together with the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus, the Ohio SBDC shares a common commitment. Our commitment is to improve access to small business resources designed to help improve the success rate of all entrepreneurs, thereby strengthening our local economy and creating jobs within our community. To that end we fully support the South Columbus Fresh Food Campus.

Sincerely,

Ariana Ulloa-Olavarrieta  
District Director

Ohio SBDC at Columbus State 550 E. Spring Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215 614-287-5294  
[www.SBDCColumbus.com](http://www.SBDCColumbus.com)